



STOP PRESS

DRAGON

INFORMATION BOOM FOR USERS

Interest around the Dragon 32 Home Computer is growing at a rapid rate. To satisfy information hungry Dragon Users, a wide selection of material on how to enjoy programming this remarkable machine is becoming widely available.

The first edition of our newsletter was enthusiastically received and many interesting letters have been received by the editor. These include some exciting new program listings and examples will be included in the next issue of the newsletter.

We have expanded this issue of the newsletter to an 8 page format and if the response continues to grow there are plans to develop the newsletter into a regular magazine style publication.

An independent Dragon User magazine has just been produced by Sunshine Publications and will appear in the news agencies this month with a cover price of 60p. We have enclosed the first issue free of charge with the compliments of Dragon Data Ltd.

Several books are appearing in the shops on the Dragon 32. Notable among these are:

'The Dragon 32' by Ian Sinclair (published by Granada and priced at £5.95) and 'The Working Dragon 32' by David Lawrence (published by Sunshine Books Ltd. priced at £5.95). Other books are

planned including one by Penguin, 'Watch out for "Dragon Magic" by Foulsham Publications, which will be aimed at the younger user and should be published shortly.

The Dragon Users Club
As mentioned before all Users who have returned their guarantee cards for the Dragon 32 to Dragon Data Ltd. are automatically members of the Dragon Users Club, which entitles them to free issues of the Dragon Newsletter.

Many local or regionally based Dragon User Clubs are being established around the country by Dragon enthusiasts wishing to share their experiences with other users who live nearby. If you have started such a club or are already a member of one of them we at Dragon Data would be delighted to hear from you.

We would like to publish a complete list of such clubs in a future issue of the newsletter. Please therefore write to:

Miss Cathy Hyde
Dragon Data Ltd.
Kerfig Industrial Estate
Margam
Port Talbot
West Glamorgan

In this way we can put other users in your area in touch with your club. If there does not

appear to be a club in your area then write to Cathy at Dragon and she will help you find a suitable club.

Dragon Data do not intend to involve themselves directly in the running of local clubs, believing it best left to the enthusiasm of their members. However, if club officials would like support material for Users Days etc. then write to Cathy for assistance.

Contributions

If you would like to contribute programs, comments, suggestions, hints or stories on using the Dragon 32 then please write enclosing details to:

The Editor, The Newsletter, c/o Dragon Data Ltd., Kerfig Industrial Estate, Margam, Port Talbot, West Glamorgan.

All program suggestions should enclose a program listing and a letter explaining its basic structure. Long programs should be submitted on a cassette tape which is itself clearly labelled with your name, and an addressed envelope for its return. List program lines with a maximum of 64 characters per line (two screen lines) and number lines in multiples of 10.

MACHINE CODE CORNER



The 6800 microprocessor, which is the heart (or perhaps we should say "brain") of the Dragon, is an extremely flexible device which allows you, the programmer, a lot more power than is available from other microprocessors. There are two temporary storage registers, and nearly 1000 different instructions with which to manipulate them. We won't discuss them all in this article.

Let's start with just four of the registers: X, Y, A and B. X and Y are both 2-byte (16-bit) index registers, which can store the same amount of information as 2 bytes of memory - that is any number from 0 to 65535. In particular, they can store the "address" of any of the Dragon's memory locations. A and B are 1-byte (8 bit) accumulators which are used for manipulating data. In Assembly language A and B are the nearest we have to an ordinary BASIC variable with which we can perform the usual arithmetic operations like adding and subtracting. A and B may be combined to form D, a 2-byte accumulator. A being the most significant byte.

An Assembly language program is written in four columns or fields. Each statement takes one line, but need not use all four fields. The first field is the Symbolic field. One use of this is to label a line for branching purposes. The second field is the Command field, in which the main statement is placed. The third is the Operand, which may be a memory address or data. The fourth is for Comments, the equivalent of BASIC REM's.

Some useful commands are those which let us put numbers into the registers - the equivalent of LET A = 5 or just A = 5 in BASIC. In Assembly language, this becomes

LDA #5

The command is LDA (load A) and the operand is #5, which just means the number 5. This type of operand is called Immediate Addressing - (the operand is the data itself, as shown by the # sign).

Another form of the load command is

LDA \$7FFF

(The \$ shows it is a hexadecimal number.) This loads A with the contents of memory \$7FFF, not the actual number 7FFF (which is too big for A anyway). This is called Extended Addressing - (the operand is an address).

A third form of the LDA command is

LDA X

This loads A with the contents of the memory indicated by the X register. So if X contains the value \$400 A will be loaded with the contents of memory \$400. This is called Indexed Addressing - (and is indicated by the comma, in the same way that Immediate is indicated by #).

There are load commands for the other registers: LDY, LDX, LDY. These have basically the same effect, except that the 2-byte registers, when loaded with Extended or Indexed Addressing, take the 2-byte value which is made up of the memory indicated and the memory which follows it. So in the case of Indexed Addressing

LDX X

(where X has the value \$400, \$400 contains the value \$12 and \$401 contains the value \$34) will load D with the value \$1234.

Having loaded a register, it is useful to be able to store the value somewhere. This is done with the store commands STA, STB, STD, STX, STY. For example

STA \$7FFF

stores the contents of register A, in memory \$7FFF (Extended Addressing). Similarly

STY X

stores the most significant byte of the contents of register Y in the memory indicated by register X, and the other byte in the memory following (Indexed Addressing).

A useful facility available with Indexed Addressing is the auto-increment and auto-decrement. For example

LDA X+

loads A from the memory indicated by X, then adds 1 to the value of X. Auto-decrement works in reverse order.

LDA X-

first subtracts 1 from X, then loads A from the memory indicated by X.

A third set of commands which are very useful is the set of compare commands, CMPA, CMPB, CMPD, CMPX, CMPI. These may be followed by conditional branching commands. For example

CMPI #1000

BNE LOOP

compares X with the number 1000, and branches if not equal (BNE) to the statement labelled LOOP.

There are more registers, more forms of address and of course many more commands, but we have enough now to write a simple program. The area of memory used by the high resolution graphics commands in PMODE3.1 and PMODE4.1 is \$500 to \$1000. The following program fills the graphics screen with the configuration represented by the byte \$7FFF.

```

LDA $7FFF
LDX #5000
LDOP STA ,X+
CMPI #1000
BNE LDOP
RTS
    
```

If you have an assembler, you will be able to assemble this and run it immediately. But those of you who want to translate it yourselves need to know some "opcodes". The opcode for any command depends on the addressing mode. The ones discussed in this article are, in hexadecimal:

	LDA	LDY	LDX	LDY	STB	STB	STD	STX	STY
Immediate	88	D8	CC	88	1088	-	-	-	-
Extended	88	F8	FC	88	1088	87	F7	FD	87
Indexed	AC	D8	DC	AC	1040	AF	87	DD	AF

	CMPA	CMPB	CMPD	CMPX	CMPI
Immediate	81	01	1081	85	1085
Extended	81	01	1081	85	1085
Indexed	A1	01	10A1	85	10A5

10 BF

As you see, some comments take 2 bytes. The opcode for **INR** is \$3E. Its addressing mode is relative, which means that its operand is adjusted on relative to the current position (which is the first byte of the next instruction). **RTS** has opcode \$3B. The operand **X+** is represented by \$80.

The program now becomes: line by line

```
85 7F FF, 8C 00 00, A7 00, 8C 10 00, 26 F8, 00
```

or in decimal

```
182 127 255, 142 0 0, 167 128, 140 39 0, 36 248, 0
```

It can be entered any the Oregon, starting at byte \$2000 using the BASIC program:

```
10 FOR I=0 TO 10 : RE-ASX : POKE 32000+I,X :
```

NEXT I

```
20 DATA 182,127,255,142,0,0,167,128,140,39,0,36,248
```

To investigate the available graphic effects try running the BASIC program

```
10 PCL=AH : PMODE=3 : SCREEN=0
```

```
20 FOR I=0 TO 255 : POKE 32767+I, I
```

EXEC 32000

```
30 FOR I=0 TO 1000 : NEXT I
```

When the value in **32767** is 0, 85, 128 or 255, the result is the same as using the **PCLS** command

You may like to experiment with range operations in the machine code. For example, if you alter the 5th byte from 0 to 18 breaking the 2nd line of the program **LOX #81000** the result is an operation on the lower half of the screen only. Similarly, the 10th byte may be adjusted to alter the lower limit of the effect. Keep experimenting - it's the best way to learn about your computer

ERRATA

Many of the letters to this editor received in response to the issue of the newsletter pointed out that there were some errors in the program listings

Thank you to Mr. Alan Jones of Banbury who writes to say that he found the newsletter "most useful" but noticed that line 20 of the Machine code program featured a 2 instead of a 0. Mr. J. Johnson of Potters Bar, who found an error in the Cassette Loading article, which we have corrected correctly in our follow up feature on page 5 of this issue, and to Mr. O Mulloy of Cambridge, who amongst many others noted that the spaces were missing in the Oregon Byte examples.

Like many other publishers before us, we have found that taking program listings to the typesetting stage can cause problems. We have, therefore, listed below some corrections which we hope might help a number of confused users around the country.

1. Oregon Bytes-examples

(a) **FOR I=0 TO 10 : RE-ASX : Y THEMSTOP**

(c) **ONX GOTO 1,2,3**

3. What are Hexadecimal numbers? - Colon instead of semi-colon in line 40

40 **HE=0 - 10=Y GOSUB 5000**

HE=AS+HB IFY - OTHER 00

Machine Code corner (second) line of program has a 2 instead of 0

20 **FOR I=0 TO 10 READ J:POKE I+32000,J: NEXT J**

Also in the assembly language program two if a are missing-

2 **LOX #3400**

4 **CMPI #5500**

by typing in the two comments

POKE255

NEW

Now **MEM** gives 31215 bytes. All of this memory is now available for our BASIC program - but of course we can't use high resolution graphics

We can make limited use of strings even without any memory reserved for string storage. A statement like

XS = "THIS IS A STRING"

doesn't use any string space. Neither does

10 DATA THIS IS A STRING

20 READ XS

The statement

YS = XS

doesn't make a new string (only a copy of one that already exists - XS) and so doesn't use any string space

But statements like

ZS = XS + YS and

AS = LEFT\$(XS,1)

create new strings and therefore need string space to store them

The **INPUT** statements

INPUT XS and

INPUT I = LXS

also need string space to store the strings which are input

So using the methods described above, we can make 31215 bytes available for BASIC use, and even with no string space reserved we can make limited use of string variables.



MORE DRAGON BYTES

How much of Oregon's 32K of RAM is actually available to us for BASIC programs? Try switching your Dragon on and typing

MEM

Back will come the answer: 24871. So is that all our Dragon really has to offer us - less than 25K? A few disappointed writers have claimed this to be the case. But they are wrong.

When you switch on, certain areas of memory are automatically reserved - 255 bytes for string storage and 8144 bytes for high resolution graphics. Since the remaining 24871 bytes are ample for most purposes, we don't usually bother to alter these default reservations, even if there are no strings or graphics in our programs. But the extra bytes are available

First type **CLEAR 0**

This releases the 255 string bytes. **MEM** now gives a value of 25071 bytes

Now to release the high resolution graphics bytes type

PCL=AR 1

This releases all but one of the graphics "pages"

MEM now gives 29679. Unfortunately we cannot use the command **PCL=AR 0**, but the effect can be achieved



SPIRALS

Mr Alan Jones of Banbury sent us this adaptation of one of the Mosaic programs. The display of graphics takes about eighteen minutes.

```
10 N=30 A=18 P=1
20 PMODE=4:18:CHS(0):1 PCLSB:COLOR 0.5
30 LINE(0,0)-(128,94)PSET
40 FOR I=1 TO 1000
50 X=X+L*(SIN(R)) Y=Y+L*(COS(R))
60 IF X<=128 OR X>128 THEN 110
70 IF Y<=94 OR Y>94 THEN 110
80 LINE--(X+128,Y+94)PSET
90 R1=R1+8/R-R1*57.25578 L=L+8.5
100 NEXT I
110 X=X+Y-B/R-B/R+0.5 Y=Y-B+L+L-B
120 IF R>165 THEN R=165 T=T+1
130 IF T>=100 THEN 2:THEN A=12 ELSE A=15
140 GOTO 20
```

A further modification will change the monochrome display into colour. Change the PMODE in line 20 to PMODE=3.1 and change line 80 to read

```
80 COLOR PMODE(1)+1 LINE--(X+128,Y+94)PSET
```

THE CONTRIBUTORS

The editor of the Dragon Newsletter would like to thank the contributors for all their help in creating the first two issues of the Dragon newsletter.

They are Alan Byrds, Mervyn Pearson and Alan Mayer, all from University College, Swansea.

EXTRA EDIT COMMANDS

Have you ever been editing a long, complicated line of a program and accidentally used the H or K commands, deleting a lot of hard work by mistake? If you have, or if you think it just might happen in the future, you will be glad to know about a few extra commands, not included in the last on page 40 of your Dragon handbook.

A...abandons the current attempt to edit, restoring the line to the situation before the editor was called. You remain in EDIT mode.

E...has the same effect as [ENTER], leaving the editor, restoring the line and returning to keyboard.

Q...has the combined effect of A and E.

These commands will work in the ordinary EDIT mode. If you have typed H you will be in insert mode, from which you must return by typing [SHIFT] before you can use A or Q. If you have typed K, you must type another character to complete the full sequence before you can use A or Q to restore the line.

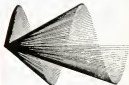
A FORETASTE OF LINES TO COME?

The use of the LINE command in high resolution graphics is worthy of an article of its own. The following program uses this command in conjunction with the SIN function.

```
10 INPUT "AMPLITUDE", P,MODE(4), STEP(1) ON 27,A,P,5
20 S=P*100 PMODE(3)=1 SCREEN(1)=PCLSB
30 FOR I=0 TO 256 STEP 5:COLOR 0.5+I/2 Y=A*(SIN(R))
40 LINE(0,0)-(128+Y)PSET NEXT I
50 GOTO 20
```

The figures in brackets are suggested input values but try others.

If you would like the diagram in one colour only, edit line 30 and change the second 1 to 0.



CASSETTE LOADING

In the last issue there was an error in the **REPLACE** color() in the one line command which was suggested to cure problems with Automatic Recording Levels.

The line should have read:

```
SOUND 120,20: FOR N=1 TO
1400 NEXT:CSAVE"program name"
```

More recording tips: (1) Cassette tapes do get worn with use especially at the beginning of the tape. This can cause loading errors. It is a good idea to keep a library copy of your program on a separate tape.

(2) The **SKIPF** command provides a method of checking that a program has been successfully saved. After using **CSAVE** "program name", rewind the tape and press only the **PLAY** on the recorder. Then enter **SKIPF** "program name". If your Dragon returns with OK without an **IO ERROR** you are very unlikely to encounter difficulties loading that program in future. If however, you do get an **IO ERROR** then your program is still safe in Dragon. Check for causes of the error and then try again.

HOW NOT TO GET TIED UP IN KNOTS WITH STRINGS



Have you explored Dragon's stringhandling capabilities yet? If not, you may be surprised to discover how powerful they are.

The first thing you will find is that operations with strings are very quick. To demonstrate this let's take another look at the subject of the machine code demonstration in the last issue of the Firebreather, which filled the first screen with characters of one kind. A plain man's approach to this in BASIC would be to use the PRINTIN facility. The following program will suffice:

```
10 FOR I=0 TO 511:PRINT=I;A;:NEXT I
20 GOTO20
```

You will find that the last line of A's is printed and then seems to be rubbed out! This is, because the automatic "screen scroll" comes into play immediately the last character of the last line is printed. Answering though this is, by changing line 20 to 20 GOTO100, we can count the occurrences of the bottom line and so time the printing process. Result: 2.2 seconds to fill the screen.

Can this be improved upon without recourse to Machine Code?

Yes it can, by using the BASIC command AS = STRING\$(255,"A") which assembles 255 A's in one long string (of maximum length).

```
10 CLEAR1000
20 AS = STRING$(255,"A")
30 PRINT=0;AS;PRINT=255;AS;
40 CLS:GOTO20
```

The resulting flashes (corresponding to the CLS operation in line 40) allow a further timing of the print process. Result: approximately one sixth of a second, which is over thirteen times faster than our first attempt.

So much for speed. Add to it the use of INKEY\$ to monitor what is happening at the keyboard and you have the power to construct programs which respond (instantaneously, it seems) to instructions. For example, modifying our last program to:

```
10 CLEAR1000
20 K$=INKEY$:IF K$="" THEN 20
30 AS=STRING$(255,K$+ASC(K$))
40 PRINT=0;AS;PRINT=255;AS;
50 GOTO20
```

and we have a BASIC program which seems, almost as quick as its machine code equivalent.

The command INKEY\$ is also very useful for the control of printed text that scrolls the screen to scroll. A more sophisticated alternative to the BREAK key followed by CONT is demonstrated below. Press any key to stop and then restart the program.

```
10 A=A+1:PRINT A
20 AS=INKEY$:IF AS="" THEN40
30 AS=INKEY$:IF AS="" THEN30
40 GOTO10
```

Many programs offer the user a choice and the common way to present that choice is with a MENU. The following program demonstrates how this can be done painlessly and routinely.

```
10 AS="ABC" CLS
20 PRINT=33,"YOU HAVE A CHOICE - TYPE IN"
30 PRINT=170,"A, FOR APPLE"
40 PRINT=234,"B, FOR BANANA"
50 PRINT=298,"C, FOR CURRANT"
60 CS=INKEY$:IF CS="" THEN60
70 C=INSTR(1,AS,CS):IF C=0 THEN60
80 ON C GOSUB60,100,150 GOTO20
90 PRINT=450,"APPLE" RETURN
100 PRINT=450,"BANANA" RETURN
110 PRINT=450,"CURRANT" RETURN
```

The crux of the program lies in the use of the function INSTR in line 70 which searches through string AS starting with character 1 to find CS. It records the position of the first occurrence of CS, or 0 if CS is not present. Correct that to line 80 which uses ON, GOSUB and you have an extremely neat method of branching to alternative procedures at the touch of the appropriate key!

There are numerous ways to exploit this technique - it is particularly useful in conjunction with DRAWON a PLAY and DRAW commands. This final program shows you to key in PLAY commands and then to have the result:

```
10 AS=CHR$(0)+" "+CHR$(13):CLS:FS=""
TS=""
20 K$=INKEY$:IF K$="" THEN20
30 K=INSTR(1,AS,K$):IF K=0 THEN TS=TS+K$
:GOSUB100
40 ON K GOSUB110,150,150 GOTO20
100 TS=LEFT$(TS,LEN(TS)-1):GOSUB150:
RETURN
150 TS=TS+" "+FS+TS:TS=""
:GOSUB200:RETURN
150 GOSUB110:PLAYFS:FS="" CLS
:GOSUB200:RETURN
150 PRINT=30;TS:RETURN
200 PRINT=100;FS:TS="" :GOSUB150:
RETURN
```

To try the program out key in PLAY commands (illegal ones will be accepted but will produce "FC ERROR IN 150"). The program is so constructed as to accept segments of the form (up to a semi-colon) and then add the (latest) segment to the full play command. The backward arrow may be used to correct mistakes (prior to the semi colon) and the Play command is executed on pressing ENTER.

With minor modifications the program can be adapted to play the tape backwards as well. With so many strings to enter how the possibilities are endless!

DRAGON
SOFTWARE



SOFTWARE AVAILABLE FOR THE DRAGON 32

- | | | | |
|--|--|----------------------------------|---|
| A 0500 DRAGON SELECTION TWO | Five games for the younger user. Written in BASIC, they can be typed and edited. | A 0514 CLIMBER | An adventure game set in the desert. |
| A 0501 DRAGON SELECTION TWO | Collection of utilities. Create your own data base, write your own tunes. | A 0506 BERSERK | A challenging shooting game, based on the popular arcade game, one or two players. A high resolution game in black and white. Joysticks required. |
| A 0502 DUJEST | Adventure game in interlaced writing. Defeat Moorcock, master of the dark castle. | A 0507 METEORBOSS | Guide your ship through treacherous asteroid belt. A game requiring skill, fast reactions and concentration. A high resolution game in black and white. Joysticks optional. |
| A 0503 MADNESS AND THE MINOTAUR | A real-time adult adventure game. | A 0508 COSMIC INVADERS | Dragon version of the famous arcade game. |
| A 0504 PERSONAL FINANCE | Keep track of family finances. | A 0509 GHOST ATTACK | Maze game for one player. Joysticks required. |
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